

ROYAL SOCIETY PENSIONERS' ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting 2010

MINUTES

At the 24th Annual General Meeting of the RSPA held at the Royal Society on Monday 17 May 2010:

Present: Peter Warren - Chairman

Chris Argent (<i>Editor, Beyond the Terrace</i>)	Joan Hurrell
Tom Berry	Christine Johnson (<i>Joint Events Secretary</i>)
Ratti Bulsara	Erica Lazarus (<i>Joint Events Secretary</i>)
Choong Kar Chan	Jennifer Malcolm
Frances Chetham	Len Mole (<i>Pensions Trustee</i>)
Vera Cockle	Susan Moss
Brenda de Vere-Lewis (<i>Hon. Secretary</i>)	Maurice Oak
John Deverill	Nigel Parfitt (<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>)
Sandra Goodall	Tania Prigorowsky
David Griffin	Keith Root
Don Harlow	Nadia Slow
Ann Hicks (<i>Committee Member</i>)	Jackie Witchells

1. Apologies for absence

The Hon. Sec. reported that 48 members were unable to attend. George Hemmen and Jeannie Lamb had sent their greetings to all present.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 May 2009 were confirmed.

3. Hon. Secretary's Report

The Hon. Secretary reported that the current membership of the Association was 74¹ and that Claire Burden's membership had lapsed because despite repeated reminders she had failed to pay her subscription for 2009-2010 and 2010/2011. Jean Martin had died on 17 September 2009, and she, Diana Chapman, Erica Lazarus, Ratti Bulsara, Jenny Shanahan and Nadia Slow had represented the RSPA at the funeral. Peter Collins had attended on behalf of the Royal Society.

A bottle of wine and a card had been sent to mark Terry Garrett's 80th birthday and his letter of thanks was passed round the table for members to read. Flowers had been sent to Chris Alexander who had become seriously during 2009 and at Christmas to Ursula Tokle who was now in a nursing home.

The Hon. Secretary said that the Association had received at very short notice notification of the expiry of Len Mole's term of office as Pensioner Nominated Trustee, and a duly completed nomination on his behalf had been submitted on 30 November 2009 to comply with the 1 December closing date.

¹ Now 73 following notification of Leslie Townsend's death

4. Hon. Treasurer's Report

The Hon. Treasurer presented the income and expenditure account for 2010/2011. The accounts had been audited by David Sturt on 16 April 2010. The Hon. Treasurer said that the only change to the unaudited accounts which members had before them was the addition of £44 to cover wine served at lunch prior to the visit to the Household Cavalry Museum giving a carried forward balance of £1425.

The Hon. Treasurer said that the Association's accounts were now satisfactory. He drew attention to two factors affecting the accounts:

1. The RSPA now paid for wine to be served at lunches prior to RSPA outings
2. A reduction in Committee Members' travelling expenses as there were fewer long distance fares to cover.

Referring to the Welfare Fund, the Hon. Treasurer said that this was used to assist with the cost of essential taxi fares of members attending RSPA events, and for flowers sent to sick members. The Royal Society topped the balance remaining in the fund each year to £200.

The Chairman congratulated the Hon. Treasurer for leaving the Association's accounts in such a good state, and presented him with a bottle of wine in recognition of his services to the RSPA over the past five years.

5. Pensions Trustee's Report

The Pensions Trustee said currently 59 pensioners were paid by annuity and 37 (those who had retired after 2001) directly from the Pension Fund. There were also 174 deferred members.

The Pensions Trustee referred to a letter from Barnett Waddingham received recently by annuitants. This referred to the fact that under the terms of the Pension Scheme members received an increase of 4% each year on the anniversary of retirement, rising to a maximum of 5% if inflation (as measured by the Retail Price Index) rose above 4%. As there had been some increases in inflation, retrospective payments had been made. David Griffin said he was an annuitant, but had received no such letter. The Pensions Trustee agreed to contact Barnett Waddingham to ascertain how many annuitants had received letters.

6. *Beyond the Terrace*

The Editor passed round copies of *BTT47* and thanked David Griffin for his editing assistance. Copy for the next newsletter will be welcome.

7. Joint Events Secretaries Report

Christine Johnson, Joint Events Secretary, reported on events as follows:

- 14 September – 14 members had visited the re-furbished Royal Institution
- 14 December – 30 members and guests had attended a special Christmas lunch at the Royal Society
- 25 March – 15 Members had visited the Household Cavalry Museum

Christine said that that she and Erica were looking into the possibility of a visit to either the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the Wallace Collection for the Autumn. Other suggestions for visits by those present included Spencer House and the Florence

Nightingale Museum. Christine confirmed that the Christmas lunch will be held on 9 December with the price held at the 2009 level.

8. Elections

- a. **Hon. Treasurer** – Noted that the Hon. Treasurer had completed his fifth and final year. There being no other nominations, those present endorsed a nomination made by the RSPA Committee on 30 November 2009 that Keith Root be elected as Honorary Treasurer for 2010-2013.
- b. **Hon. Secretary** – Noted that the Hon. Secretary had completed four years in office but was eligible for re-election for a fifth and final year. There being no other nominations, those present endorsed a nomination made by the RSPA Committee on November 2009 that Brenda de Vere-Lewis be elected as Hon. Secretary for 2010/11.

The Chairman said that it was essential that a successor to the Honorary Secretary be identified by the time of the RSPA Committee Meeting on 30 November 2010 and anyone with suggestions was invited to contact the Chairman privately.

David Griffin asked if more communications could be sent to members by email. The Chairman said it was important not to discriminate against members who were not connected to the internet, and the Secretary considered it inappropriate to expect members to download documents of considerable length.

9. News of Members

The Hon. Secretary said that sixteen members had sent in news of their activities which she would pass to the Hon. Editor of *BTT*. She also reported on the current state of health of certain members. The Hon. Secretary said that she had recently spoken to Nancy Tupholme on the telephone, and she passed round a birthday card for members to sign for Nancy's 98th birthday on 23 May.

10. Report from the RS Human Resources Office

The Chairman welcomed Karina Rook, Royal Society Human Resources Manager. Karina said that the RS currently had 147 members of staff, which was the largest ever, although some were part-time. There had been an 11.8% turnover of staff over the past year and despite the recession and the Society's generous leave entitlement it had been difficult to recruit the right calibre of staff. Referring to the Kavli Royal Society International Centre, Karina said that only about five members of its staff would be regarded as being Royal Society employees.

Karina said that a new payroll system was being developed, and Human Resources was now focusing on learning and development of its staff and this was leading to changes in the way the Society ran its training programmes. The Society was also assessing its staff requirements for the future, and a senior management team under the chairmanship of the Treasurer was considering this. The Society was seeking to appoint the first head of the Kavli Research Centre, and the task of advertising for a new Executive Director for the Society rested with a head hunting organization.

Karina then responded to the following queries raised by members:

- The Hon. Secretary referred to communication problems between the Society and the RSPA. Karina said that more than one database was in use, and it was agreed that the Secretary should contact her privately regarding the areas of concern.

- The Chairman asked how the Society's Corporate Memory was maintained. Karina admitted that there were difficulties in accessing archived files.
- The Editor asked what the Society was doing to reduce its carbon footprint. Karina said it was making a subtle contribution, and that the Kavli Centre would be carbon neutral.
- John Deverill enquired if RS staff were required to have language qualifications. Karina said that this was not generally a pre-requisite but would be job role specific

11. 350th Anniversary of the Royal Society

The Chairman welcomed Dominic Reid who had agreed to talk to members about the Society's plans to celebrate its 350th Anniversary. Dominic said that plans to celebrate the anniversary in 2010 had commenced three years ago, and the year had opened with the *In our Time* programme on Radio 4 which had attracted high listening numbers. The programme was now available on the BBC I-Player. Following on was the successful launch of Bill Bryson's *Seeing Further. The story of Science and the Royal Society: 350 Years of the Royal Society and Scientific Endeavour* which had gone into the top 30 books in Amazon. A paper back edition with index is now planned.

Many other events and activities are occurring during the anniversary year including:

- Issue in February of a set of 10 postage stamps commemorating eminent fellows from the 17th to 20th century
- Activities associated with the Local Heroes and Capital Science Programmes
- Festival of Science and Arts, South Bank Centre, 25 June – 4 July
- Bill Bryson Lecture 30 September
- Special Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral, 9 June, when the sermon will be delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and at which music composed by Elgar for the 250th Anniversary of the Society will be played
- Convocation of the Fellowship on 23 June, the centerpiece of the celebrations, and designed primarily for Fellows and which will be held in the presence of HM The Queen, and other Royal Fellows

RSPA Members will receive a special invitation to attend the Royal Society's Summer Science Exhibition on 2 July.

Dominic said that arising from interest derived from the many and varied activities, there had been an 80% increase in applications to hold Royal Society discussion meetings, and attendance at such meetings had gone up by 30%. He concluded by saying that the format for Anniversary Day on 30 November had yet to be decided.

12. Date of next AGM

It was agreed to hold the next AGM at the Royal Society, on Monday, 16 May 2011 at 2 p.m., to be preceded by lunch.

AGM.Min.10. BdeVL

John T. Van 27 June 2010
16/5/11